Reviewer’s report

Title: The typically developing paediatric foot: how flat should it be? A systematic review

Version: 0 Date: 29 May 2017

Reviewer: Andrea Coda

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for the opportunity to review this interesting paper.

I believe that this extensive systematic review has been able to provide clarity around a very popular topic in podopaediatric and has offered interesting answers for clinicians that seek at anatomical 'norms' in order to base their podiatric managements. Please note below few comments that should be addressed prior to publication:

TITLE:

The title states "A descriptive, comparative review"; however only in page 3 line 13 - the reader is informed about the actual methodology being a Systematic Review. I would suggest to substitute in the title "A descriptive, comparative review with 'systematic Review'.

ABSTRACT:

Very detailed and well written. The Conclusion section seemed disproportionately larger than the intro & main body. I would possibly suggest to reduce the wordage in the conclusion section and provide more details about the methodology of the paper

KEYWORDS:

Please re-arrange the order of the 'key words', either by alphabetical order OR by relevance to this publication. Provided that it is not exceeding the max number of 'key words' available, please also there is no mention about 'children', 'podopaediatric' etc reflecting the word used during the 'search strategy'.

BACKGROUND:

Page 4 line 16: 'developing typically', please either remove it or rephrase it.
Page 4 line 26: please substitute 'pervaded' with effected / influenced/ jeopardised or similar...

Page 4 line 37: please check if REF style is correct (Shibuya et al. 2010).

Page 4 line 54: please check if REF style is correct. Evans, 2008 pg 392.

METHODS:

Page 5 line 27-28: please provide REf to the statement.

Page 6 line 16-18 regarding 'any discrepancies in opinion. Was there a 3 impartial reviewer involved? If YES please specify within the text: "Disagreements between the two authors regarding full-text inclusion were resolved by a third reviewer (XXX). If disagreements were not resolved successfully by the third reviewer, study authors were to be contacted, though this was never required". like it was reported on page 7 line 10. If NOT - please explain why a third reviewer was not sought or possibly add it to the limitation section.

Page 6 line 54: please provide REF about the EAI.

Page 6 line 55 - The author stated that "Studies needed to be of a quantitative design" - please provide further details of the methodologies of the included studies.

Page 7 line 22 - please substitute 'rule of thumb' ..too colloquial. Possibly substitute it with 'standard'!

RESULTS:

Page 7 line 52. Possibly change 'would enable' with 'would have enabled'

Page 8 line 20 - punctuation mistake

DISCUSSION:

Page 13 line 29 please substitute compilation with summary or database

Page 14 line 24-28 please provide the REF related to the 'three methods'

Page 14 line 51 - please ensure that you call this manuscript Systematic Review and not 'Review'. It happens multiple time thought out this submission.

Page 15 line 38 - please provide REF 'has been shown'...by whom?
Within the limitation section, please possibly consider the fact that it was not possible to differentiate data specifically in relation to gender. As female children typically tend to develop sooner that the boys at the same age, it might be useful to inform the reader and clinicians that they should not possibly expect the same values at same age between boys and girls. As you also investigated studies from multiple international sources, please possibly consider to make a statement indicating that it was not possible to ascertain any trends based on country / nationality/ race / place of origin. Alternatively through your search, it would be otherwise interesting to inform the readers if you found any significant results in biomechanical changes in feet structure based on where child was originally from (ie: Africa / Asian etc)

CONCLUSION:

It was not possible to find the subheading of Conclusion.

Very clear PRISMA chart. Well done.

Level of interest
Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

Declaration of competing interests
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?
6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?

If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

I declare that I have no competing interests'

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal